



## STATE OF TENNESSEE

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
Local Planning Assistance Office

### LAND-USE DATA

This land-use data was derived from the Computer Assisted Appraisal System (CAAS) property assessment data maintained by the State of Tennessee's Comptroller of the Treasury. It will aid planners and economic development professionals in the Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD) in inventorying and analyzing land-use patterns across Tennessee in efforts to develop public policies related to infrastructure, services, and regulations.

The CAAS dataset contains valuable information that can be extracted and used for various planning and economic development activities. However, CAAS data must be carefully scrutinized and its uses carefully considered. ECD community planners have long relied upon tax information to supplement their knowledge of an area and to inform local decision-making processes. Tax-related figures are often the only data source with the capability of mapping a number of key variables at the parcel level. However, tax records are structured around their primary purpose: accurately assessing real property to determine taxation based on property use and improvement values. To use these records for a different purpose requires a close understanding of the data, especially limitations that are inherent in collection methods and in the structure of the tables themselves.

A number of fields in the CAAS data tables and descriptors of the parcels obtained from the Tennessee Base Mapping Program (BMP) were used to classify parcels into one of the designated land-use categories. Fields of information, such as Property Type, Improvement Type, Mobile Home Code, Number of Mobile Homes, Improvement Value, Land Description, and Number of Dwelling Units, were among those used to classify parcels. The subtypes defined for BMP parcel data were used to assign parcels to the road and railroad rights-of-way and water body categories.

One limiting factor in the development of this land-use data is the availability of the CAAS property assessment data and parcel polygon data. While widely available, the CAAS data is not available for all 95 counties in the state. As of 2009, it is available for 88 counties. In counties where the CAAS system is not used, the property assessor maintains assessment data in a unique system. As this land-use model has been created to work with the CAAS data, it is generally incompatible with the other systems. Through the Tennessee BMP, parcel polygon data has been created in the vast majority of the state.

Another limitation of the CAAS and BMP datasets involves their accuracy. Property changes ownership every day, and parcels are constantly subdivided and reconfigured; consequently, these datasets change often and at any point sustain some level of inaccuracy. The CAAS and BMP parcel polygon datasets were obtained in January 2009. However, due to variations in the process by which the BMP data is updated, the parcel data was not necessarily current as of January 2009. Because the CAAS attribute data and the BMP parcels do not reflect the same point in time, discrepancies exist between these datasets. The CAAS data may contain data for parcels not reflected in the parcel database, and the reverse can also be true.

A further issue that must be acknowledged revolves around table organization. A tax record consists of a parcel number and all the attendant data needed to describe it. Tax assessors commonly place improvements on separate "cards" attached to a parcel's main record. Multiple cards indicate multiple structures on a lot. In the CAAS tables, these situations appear as multiple records, each with the same parcel identification number. This organizational scheme creates a problem whenever the tables are joined to a spatial data layer in a GIS. The parcel identification number serves as the main link between the CAAS tables and the spatial parcel layer. The GIS will add only one record per parcel in a direct join between attribute tables. Any parcel with two or more cards will appear to have only one after the join is completed. The implications for the accuracy of a land-use map may be severe.

Despite the above issues and others not explained here, CAAS and BMP data are useful in deriving a "first cut" land-use determination without spending weeks or months conducting windshield surveys as in the past. This land-use data represents this "first cut," and any use of this data must recognize the inherent limitations of these datasets and the purpose for which the data was created.

## LAND-USE CLASSIFICATION: ECD LOCAL PLANNING ASSISTANCE OFFICE

<b>00</b>	<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>
01	Single-Family Residential (SFR) - Less than five acres
02	Single-Family Residential (SFR) - Five acres or larger *
03	Duplex
04	Multi-family
05	Mobile Home
06	Mobile Home Park
07	Resort Residential
<b>10</b>	<b>COMMERCIAL</b>
11	General Commercial
12	Office (Professional/Medical/Gen)
13	Motel/Hotel
14	General Commercial-Residential Split
15	Golf Course
16	Nursing Home
19	– Verify Commercial
<b>20</b>	<b>INDUSTRIAL</b>
21	Light Industrial/Warehousing
22	Heavy Industrial
<b>30</b>	<b>PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC USES</b>
31	Public
32	Semi-Public
<b>40</b>	<b>UTILITIES</b>
41	Utilities
<b>50</b>	<b>VACANT</b>
51	Vacant lot – less than 5 acres
52	Vacant tract – 5 acres or larger **
53	Vacant - Resort Lot (vacant residential lot in resort subdivision)
<b>60</b>	<b>AGRICULTURAL</b>
61	Agricultural tract unimproved (No SFR) **
62	Agricultural tract w/ Single Family Residential *
63	Agricultural tract w/ Mobile Home
64	Agricultural tract w/ Single Family Residential AND w/ Mobile Home
65	Agricultural tract w/ Multi-Family Residential
<b>70</b>	<b>TIMBER/FOREST</b>
71	Timber tract unimproved (No SFR) **
72	Timber tract w/Single Family Residential *
73	Timber tract w/Mobile Home
74	Timber tract w/Single Family Residential AND w/ Mobile Home
75	Timber tract w/Multi-Family Residential
<b>80</b>	<b>WATER POLYGON FEATURES</b>
81	River
82	Lake or Pond
<b>90</b>	<b>TRANSPORTATION POLYGON FEATURES</b>
91	Highway/Road Right-of-Way
92	Railroad Right-of-Way
93	Airport
<b>96</b>	<b>UNCLASSIFIED STRUCTURE &lt;\$30,000</b>
<b>97</b>	<b>UNCLASSIFIED STRUCTURE &gt;=\$30,000</b>
<b>98</b>	<b>CAAS DATA UNAVAILABLE FOR PARCEL</b>
<b>99</b>	<b>UNCODED BY LAND-USE MODEL</b>

## LAND-USE CLASSIFICATION: ECD LOCAL PLANNING ASSISTANCE OFFICE

### **00 RESIDENTIAL**

---

Land dedicated to residential uses as calculated by the land-use model. This includes lands for single-family homes, duplexes, multi-family uses, mobile homes, mobile home parks, and resort residential properties. This category does not include single residential homes or mobile homes that are located on properties classified as agricultural or timber/forest by the land-use model.

- 01 Single-Family Residential (SFR) [Fewer than five acres]** — Parcels less than five acres in size with a single-family residence.
- 02 Single-Family Residential [Five acres or more] \*** — Parcels equal to or greater than five acres in size with a single-family residence.
- 03 Duplex** — Parcels with a duplex residential structure containing two dwelling units.
- 04 Multi-family** — Parcels with a multi-family residential structure(s) containing three or more dwelling units.
- 05 Mobile Home** — Parcels with four or fewer mobile homes.
- 06 Mobile Home Park** — Parcels with five or more mobile homes.
- 07 Resort Residential** — Residential parcels that are coded as "06 - Residential-Resort" in the "Land Description" field of the CAAS database and that contain no mobile homes and have an improvement value of greater than \$8,000.
- 08 — 09** Reserved residential codes for future use.

### **10 COMMERCIAL**

---

Land dedicated to commercial uses as calculated by the land-use model. This includes areas for general commercial use, office use, motel or hotel use, or nursing homes.

- 11 General Commercial** — Parcels with a general commercial use. This includes areas such as commercial retail stores, restaurants, service stations, malls, and shopping centers.
- 12 Office (Professional/Medical/Gen)** — Parcels with an office use. This includes general, professional, or medical offices as well as banks and financial offices.
- 13 Motel/Hotel** — Parcels with a motel or hotel.
- 14 General Commercial-Residential Split** — Parcels coded as general commercial for their improvement type but with a residential property type in the CAAS system. Often, the use of the parcel may be commercial, but the property may be residential in nature. An example would be a store operated out of a renovated house.
- 15 Golf Course** — Parcels coded as commercial property with a "24 - Golf Course" land description code in the CAAS data.
- 16 Nursing Home** — Parcels coded as commercial property with an "11 Nursing Homes" improvement type code in the CAAS data.
- 17 — 18** Reserved commercial codes for future use.

- 19     Verify Commercial** — Parcels that are coded as being commercial uses but for which detail is not available in the database to determine the commercial class to which they should belong. The model identifies these parcels for staff to field check and assign to the appropriate land-use category.

**20     INDUSTRIAL**

---

Land dedicated to industrial uses as calculated by the land-use model. These areas include light industry or warehousing and heavy industry.

- 21     Light Industry/Warehousing** — Parcels with light industrial and/or warehousing uses.

- 22     Heavy Industry** — Parcels with a heavy industrial use.

**23 — 29** Reserved industrial codes for future use.

**30     PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC USES**

---

Land dedicated to public and/or semi-public uses as calculated by the land-use model. These include properties owned by federal, state, county, or city government entities as well as churches, fraternal land, and cemeteries.

- 31     Public** — Parcels owned by either the federal, state, county, or city government.

- 32     Semi-Public** — Parcels owned by either a religious or fraternal organization. This category includes churches and cemeteries.

**33 — 39** Reserved public/semi-public codes for future use.

**40     UTILITIES**

---

Land dedicated to utility uses as calculated by the land-use model. This includes lands designated as "Utilities" or "Local Assessed Utilities" in the "Property Type" field of the CAAS data.

- 41     Utilities** — Parcels owned by a utility.

**42 — 49** Reserved utility codes for future use.

**50     VACANT**

---

Land that has not been intensely developed. Such lands include vacant lots and properties currently in agricultural or timber production. This category also includes farms that might have a single house or mobile home on the property but that, otherwise, have not been developed for a more intense use.

- 51     Vacant Lot [Fewer than five acres]** — Parcels fewer than five acres in size with an improvement type that is null and an improvement value of less than \$2,000.

- 52     Vacant Tract [Five acres or more] \*\*** — Parcels equal to or greater than five acres in size with an improvement type that is null and an improvement value of less than \$2,000.

- 53     Vacant - Resort Lot [Vacant residential lot in resort subdivision]** — Parcels coded in the CAAS database as "06 - Residential-Resort" in the "Land Description" field and that contain no mobile homes and have improvement values less than \$8,000.

**54 — 59** Reserved vacant codes for future use.

## **60      AGRICULTURAL**

---

Land used, at least in part, for agricultural operations, including groves, orchards, farms, or pastures. Parcels in this category are identified as agricultural lands even if the parcel contains residential structures or mobile homes. This classification is based on data in the "Land Description" field of the CAAS data.

- 61      Agricultural Tract Unimproved (No SFR) \*\*** — Parcels with land used for agricultural crops or pasture with no improvement or mobile homes.
- 62      Agricultural Tract w/SFR \*** — Parcels with land used for agricultural crops or pasture that also have a single-family residence but no mobile homes.
- 63      Agricultural Tract w/Mobile Home(s)** — Parcels with land used for agricultural crops or pasture with a mobile home(s) but no single-family residence.
- 64      Agricultural Tract w/SFR AND w/Mobile Home(s)** — Parcels with land used for agricultural crops or pasture with a single-family residence and mobile home(s).
- 65      Agricultural Tract w/Multi-Family Residential** — Parcels with land used for agricultural crops or pasture with a multi-family residence.

**66 — 69** Reserved agricultural codes for future use.

## **70      TIMBER/FOREST**

---

Land used, at least in part, for growing timber. Parcels in this category are identified as forested lands even if the parcel contains residential structures or mobile homes. This classification is based on data in the "Land Description" field of the CAAS data.

- 71      Timber Tract Unimproved (No SFR) \*\*** — Parcels with land used for growing timber with no improvement or mobile homes.
- 72      Timber Tract w/SFR \*** — Parcels with land used for growing timber and that also have a single-family residence but no mobile home(s).
- 73      Timber Tract w/Mobile Home** — Parcels with land used for growing timber and that have a mobile home(s) but no single-family residence.
- 74      Timber Tract w/SFR AND w/Mobile Home** — Parcels with land used for growing timber and that have a single-family residence and a mobile home(s).
- 75      Timber Tract w/Multi-Family Residence** — Parcels with land used for growing timber and that also have a multi-family residence.

**76 — 79** Reserved timber/forest codes for future use.

## **80      WATER POLYGON FEATURES**

---

Areas contained by bodies of water. This includes water bodies such as rivers and lakes that are not contained within other parcels. This does not include water bodies such as farm ponds.

- 81      River**
- 82      Lake or Pond**

**83 — 89** Reserved water feature codes for future use.

---

**90      TRANSPORTATION POLYGON FEATURES**

---

The total area dedicated to either road or railroad rights-of-way.

**91      Highway/Road Right-of-Way****92      Railroad Right-of-Way****93      Airport** — Not defined by the model. Must be field checked and coded by the technician.

**94 — 95** Reserved feature codes for future use.

---

**96      UNCLASSIFIED STRUCTURES <\$30,000**

---

This category represents parcels containing structures that are not classified by other sections of this land-use model. The structures may range from garages and sheds/barns to pools and pool houses and other miscellaneous structures for which the data does not provide the information needed to assign the parcel to one of the above land-use categories. The improvements on these properties are reported in the data as being valued at under \$30,000.

---

**97      UNCLASSIFIED STRUCTURES >=\$30,000**

---

This category represents parcels similar to those included in the #96 class except their improvements are valued at \$30,000 or more.

---

**98      CAAS DATA UNAVAILABLE FOR PARCEL**

---

This category includes parcels that are not classified by the land-use model due to unavailability of CAAS data for those parcels.

---

**99      UNCODED BY LAND-USE MODEL**

---

This category also includes parcels that are not coded by the land-use model because their unique property assessment characteristics do not meet any of the selection criteria for the defined land-use categories.

SPECIAL NOTE:

Categories designated with a single or double asterisk denote classes that are similar. Depending on the nature of the analysis, these classes could be combined.

\* — Parcels with a single-family residence that may be used for agricultural or timber production.

\*\* — Undeveloped parcels that may be used for agricultural or timber production or may simply be vacant.